

The College of Wooster Libraries Open Works

Senior Independent Study Theses

2018

You've Got a Friend in Me: The Effects of LGBTQIA+ Legislators on Same-Sex Partnership Rights in Latin America

Danica Genners

The College of Wooster, dgenners18@wooster.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://openworks.wooster.edu/independentstudy>

 Part of the [Comparative Politics Commons](#), and the [Latin American Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Genners, Danica, "You've Got a Friend in Me: The Effects of LGBTQIA+ Legislators on Same-Sex Partnership Rights in Latin America" (2018). *Senior Independent Study Theses*. Paper 8218.

<https://openworks.wooster.edu/independentstudy/8218>

This Senior Independent Study Thesis Exemplar is brought to you by Open Works, a service of The College of Wooster Libraries. It has been accepted for inclusion in Senior Independent Study Theses by an authorized administrator of Open Works. For more information, please contact openworks@wooster.edu.

© Copyright 2018 Danica Genners

YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND IN ME: THE EFFECTS OF LGBTQIA+
LEGISLATORS ON SAME-SEX PARTNERSHIP RIGHTS IN
LATIN AMERICA
By Danica Genners

An Independent Study Thesis
submitted to the Department of Political Science
at The College of Wooster
March, 2017

In partial fulfillment of the requirements of I.S. Thesis

Advised by:
Dr. Alvaro Corral
Second Reader: Dr. Matthew Krain

Abstract

Scholars have debated how descriptive representation might operate as a vehicle for furthering minority rights. Rarely discussed in this literature is the role that the election of LGBTQIA+ politicians can have on overall approval of LGBTQIA+ rights within a country. This study aims to identify the various effects that LGBTQIA+ sexual minority federal representatives in Latin America have on public opinion on pro-LGBTQIA+ policies. Using a multi-year, cross-national survey of eleven Latin American countries my study tests whether the election of a LGBTQIA+ representative is related to more progressive views on same-sex marriage. This study finds that the election of a LGBTQIA+ representative is one of many significant factors that positively effects views on same-sex marriage.

Acknowledgements

My independent study (I.S.) could not have been completed without the support and assistance of many that I have met in my time here at The College of Wooster. I would first like to thank my I.S. advisor, Dr. Alvaro Corral, for his patience and support through all of the work that went into completing this final product. I could not have developed and improved my writing skills without his belief in my abilities. Next I would like to thank Dr. Michele Leiby for shaping me into the person that I am today. I would not have found my passion and curiosity for human rights research without her encouragement and guidance throughout my time here. Finally, I would like to thank my friends and family. I would not have been able to accomplish this study without all of the support that I received from every one of you. You all allowed me to complain, worry, and stress to you throughout this process while still pushing me to be the best that I can be. I want to say thank you to all of you. I would not have been able to complete this study without the support of everyone I have listed above. You all have helped me to grow into who I am today. Thank You.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	i
Acknowledgements	ii
List of Tables/Figures	iv
Chapter 1: Introduction	5
Chapter 2: Review of Literature	8
I. Demographics/Locality	9
II. Transnational Networks/ International Approaches.....	11
III. Public Opinion	12
“Top-Down” Approaches	15
I. Institutional/Electoral System	15
II. The Role of Political Parties	16
III. Political Representation	18
Critiques and Hypothesis	20
Chapter 3: Methods	22
Social Contact Theory	23
Hypothesis.....	24
Chapter 4: Quantitative Analysis	30
Introduction.....	30
Descriptive Statistics	32
Results	36
Single-Country Models	40
Discussion.....	44
Chapter 5: Conclusion.....	46
Drawbacks	47
Suggestions for Future Research	49
Reference	51
Appendix.....	54

List of Tables/Figures

Figure 1: Causal Pathway Flow Chart	25
Figure 2: Comparison of Means Test on Support for Same-Sex Marriage in Latin America (2010-2016).....	30
Table 1: Demographic Summary of Survey Respondents	34
Table 2: Descriptive Statistics	35
Table 3: Effects of a LGBTQIA+ federal representative on public support for same-sex marriage – Multi-variate Ologit Regression Models	38
Table 4: Single Countries Multi-variate Ologit Regression Model.....	42

Each table is also included within the appendix.

Chapter 1: Introduction

“We want to achieve equality and equal rights for gays and lesbians in keeping with the rest of society.” – Patria Jimenez, first lesbian woman elected to Mexican federal Chamber of Deputies¹

In 1997, Patria Jimenez was elected as a representative to the Mexican Chamber of Deputies (CNN 1997). She became the first LGBTQIA+ representative to hold federal office in all of Latin America. The struggle for political representation and rights for the LGBTQIA+ community was just beginning. Over the course of the past century sexual orientation and gender identity has come to the forefront of politics throughout the world. Questions of expanding rights have spurred pro-LGBTQIA+ movements that are fighting for increased visibility and rights. After studying this phenomenon on a global scale, based in the literature that existed, I realized that there were regions of the world that were making strides in LGBTQIA+ politics without recognition and study, specifically Latin America. I was hesitant at first to pursue this topic due to my own positionality. I am a white female from the United States who does not identify with the LGBTQIA+ community. Even though I am not part of this community, I decided to pursue this topic to try to bring awareness to Latin America as a region of study for LGBTQIA+ rights. My decision then led me to pursue my research question of interest: Why have some LGBTQIA+ movements in Latin America succeeded, while others have not?

My study seeks to find the driving factors for increased gay rights throughout Latin America. The discovery of significant factors could lead to an increase in support for progressive policies that will allow LGBTQIA+ movement leaders to focus their efforts on the most useful strategies. Democracy is about increasing the rights for all citizens, regardless of their sexual or

¹ Source obtained from “Mexican gays poised to make demands for change” CNN <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/9707/27/mexico.gays/>

gender orientation. The increase in rights will benefit all citizens by creating a fairer and more equitable political system that offers the same opportunities to all members of society. Equality is one of the core ideas of democracy and the representation of diverse identities in a nation's political system is a pathway to creating a better and more accepting world.

In order to study the success of LGBTQIA+ movements, I first had to define what I meant by success. In the existing literature there are multiple definitions of this concept, and in the end, I decided to go with the simplest: acceptance within the population. The most adequate measure of acceptance of sexual minorities is same-sex marriage rights, due to this being a policy directly related to the gay community. I hypothesized that one major force that could lead to this change is the election of a LGBTQIA+ representative to federal office. For my study, I am only looking at representatives who have identified themselves as LGBTQIA+ in some form of public manner. Political elites hold a great deal of power over the populace, as shown in much of the descriptive representation literature. This in turn could be one way to foster more positive views towards LGBTQIA+ rights movements. I hypothesize that the election of a LGBTQIA+ representative to federal office will lead to increased support towards same-sex marriage policies. Based on existing survey data, I was able to create a multi-country model that measured success within the region over the course of four different survey waves spanning six years.

To capture the effects of my proposed hypothesis, I ran an ordered logistical regression statistical model. I hoped to find that my independent variable of interest, the election of a LGBTQIA+ representative, will be a significant factor in determining support for same-sex marriage. Chapter 2 examines the arguments within the existing literature on minority representation within the legislature as well as other contributing factors that determine same-sex marriage support. In Chapter 3, my methods are outlined specifically to show how and why I

measured each of my variables of interest. Finally, in Chapter 4 I provide an analysis of my results to determine whether or not I can show that there is any relationship between the election of a LGBTQIA+ representative and public opinion support for same-sex marriage. In Chapter 5, I offer a conclusion to my research project with larger takeaways and suggestions for future studies dealing with the progression of LGBTQIA+ rights across Latin America.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

The topic of social movements and political representation are not new to the world of Political Science. Multiple disciplines have approached these topics with different lenses and have revealed the complexity of discerning social movement success and the benefits of additional representation. As new political identities arise in our society, these debates are renewed. In recent years, the political inclusion of historically marginalized groups ranging from indigenous populations to women has been a common discussion in the field of political science, but it is more recently that this literature has turned its focus to sexual minority groups.

Extant literature on the topic of LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual +) representation is slowly expanding, but is currently limited primarily to the United States, Canada, and Western Europe. Although a few scholars have expanded the scope of studies to include Latin America, research in the region remains underdeveloped. Within the current literature, there are two main approaches that are taken to understand sexual minority representation and policy adoption: 1) “bottom-up” factors focusing on the mass political arena and 2) “top-down” factors that act at the level of political institutions.

“Bottom-Up” Approaches

The first camp of literature accounts for any explanation that examines how the interests and makeup of the general populace affects the political arena, and the various ways that this can occur. These “bottom-up” explanations can take the form of analyzing how cohesive movements exert pressure upon their political institutions (Marsiaj 2006) to studying how the demographic composition of a certain country affects the type of legislation it produces (Gaines and Garand 2010). Within the larger category of literature involving mass political involvement, works can be further divided into sub-categories based on three main ideas: demographics, transnational

networks that exert pressure on a political system domestically and internationally, and public opinion.

I. Demographics and Local Context

In most academic works, it is a basic assumption that demographics of a population will have an effect on the decision-making process within political institutions. This same idea can be applied to literature focusing on LGBTQIA+ domestic partnership policies; many scholars attribute the amount of legislation passed towards these issues to the demographic characteristics of the various countries or regions. Some scholars argue that some of the most important factors on policies are individual's demographics, such as educational attainment, income level, and age (Corrales 2015; Encarnación 2011; Hansen and Treul 2015; Herrick 2009). Other arguments, focus on the proportion of ethnic and racial minorities within a specific electoral districts and how those factors influence the decisions made by lawmakers (Gaines and Garand 2010; Hansen and Treul 2015; Herrick 2009; Minta 2009; Pettinicchio 2012).

One of the main theories that drives the idea that individual demographics, such as education and income level, is modernization theory. This theory argues that economic development matters when it comes to increasing tolerance for the political rights of different groups such as LGBTQIA+ populations (Corrales 2015). Therefore, in concurrence with this theory, the literature generally finds that countries with higher levels of education were found to be more tolerant towards the gay community (Corrales 2015; Encarnación 2011; Gaines and Garand 2010; Herrick 2009). Scholars have confirmed the existence of strong correlations between educational levels and tolerance toward the gay community across countries using different data sources (Herrick 2009; Encarnacion 2011). Corrales (2015) states that, "tolerance for LGBT rights increases the younger the individual" (57). These factors account for the

individual aspect of demographics, but there are also a number of ways the overall demographic differences of a particular electoral district or region of a country can affect policies.

The demographic composition of a specific district can have an important effect on both the amount of support a legislator has for the LGBTQIA+ community as well as the probability that an LGBTQIA+ representative will be elected to office. The two primary district demographic variables of focus in the existing literature are the heterosexual marriage rates within the district and the percentage of a district's constituents who identify as members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Pettinicchio (2012) and Gaines and Garand (2010) both argue that if there is a high population of married heterosexual couples in a district, the district's aggregate views tend to align with the traditional views towards marriage, and therefore, are more likely to oppose gay marriage laws. Contrary to their expectations, Gaines and Garand (2010) did not find that heterosexual marriage status had a significant effect on attitudes towards gay marriage, ruling out this factor.

On the other hand, the existing population of LGBTQIA+ within a certain district was found to be a significant factor when looking at that district's tolerance towards gay marriage laws (Herrick 2009). The argument behind this relationship is based on the ideas of Social Contact Theory (Allport 1979). Social Contact Theory states that when a member of a majority group comes into contact with a minority group of any kind, they are more likely to have more positive views about that community than individuals who have had no contact with the minority group (Gaines and Garand 2010). More commonly demographic factors are solely used as controls within a study, but few sources instead analyze them as main independent variables that can shape policy outcomes.

II. Transnational Networks/ International Approaches

Similar to other social movements, domestic movements for LGBTQIA+ rights have frequently included an international component. Ogland and Verona (2014) describe the movement for LGBTQIA+ civil rights as part of a “global movement in societies across the world” (1334). The global influence of this movement can be divided into two dimensions: the influence of international norms (Carlo-Gonzalez, McKallagat, and Whitten-Woodring 2017; Encarnación 2011) and transnational networks of LGBTQIA+ activists (Corrales 2015; Kollman 2007). Extant literature testing the explanatory power of each dimension of global movements on marriage legalization policies has argued that the main way international factors can influence legalization is through transnational networks of LGBTQIA+ rights advocates. Kollman (2007) argues that international norms are important but must be accompanied by domestic legitimacy for them to be effective. She then connects this to her argument for transnational actors by stating that, “the perceived legitimacy of international norms by a national public and its government determines how influential transnational networks can be in domestic policy debates” (Kollman 2007, 330). Countering the argument, Pettinicchio (2012) looks at the presence of LGBTQIA+ rights groups as, “more of a constant than a variable” (541). In this thinking, Pettinicchio (2012) does not see the value in looking at the presence of transnational advocacy groups because they seem to be present in all cases under consideration (340).

Other scholars, focus on different types of international actors or laws that contribute to the formation of a new norm (Carlo-Gonzalez, McKallagat, and Whitten-Woodring 2017; Corrales 2015; Encarnación 2011). These actors range from cultural productions, such as TV shows (Corrales 2015) to the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (Carlo-Gonzalez, McKallagat, and Whitten-Woodring 2017). Corrales (2015) points out that transnational

advocacy networks can also be mobilized in opposition to LGBTQIA+ rights' expansion, for example, when conservative groups align themselves with homophobic actors.

III. Public Opinion

In the majority of the literature, public opinion was also used as a measure that could predict the success or failure of a policy. In the existing literature, public opinion is looked at in two ways: (1) the effect that public opinion of the population towards a policy/group has on a policy outcome and (2) how a high-profile legislator can influence the public opinion on a policy. The measurement of public opinion varies greatly throughout the literature; they range from nation-wide polls on support for same-sex marriage (SSM) (Encarnación 2011; Fish 2005; Haider-Markel 2002; Hansen and Treul 2015; Pettinicchio 2012) to measuring individuals' attitudes toward gays and lesbians as a group (Gaines and Garand 2012). In his analysis of poll results in the European Union, Fish (2005) argues that the public's opinion on the issue of SSM is important for understanding the variance in policy (34). He finds that publics tend toward restriction prior to the adoption of an expansive rights policy, after enactment policies become normalized therefore acceptance increases in subsequent years (35). Contrary to the direct role of public opinion, Pettinicchio (2012) argues that public opinion does play a role in determining a policy outcome, he argues that the, "relationship between public preferences and legislation" might be conditioned upon other variables (543). Gaines and Ganard (2010) expand on the idea of mitigating factors by surveying individuals on their different opinions on other topics, such as belief in gender roles and support for minority civil rights, in order to determine which factors may influence one's attitudes towards the LGBTQIA+ community and therefore legislation (554). Theoretical frameworks have also been argued to have an influence on possible factors.

The change in public opinion precipitated by the election of an out representative operates in accordance with Contact Theory. Similar to the causal mechanism explained in the previous section, having a close interaction with a member of a minority group can lead to a change in public opinion on issues related to the group's political rights. The existing literature studies this idea in many different ways. Carlo-Gonzalez, McKallagat, and Whitten-Woodring (2017) believe that through internet access, individuals are able to have more interactions with members of the LGBTQIA+ community and, therefore, have more positive views of the community. Meanwhile, Harden and Clark (2016) examine this idea through a process of symbolic representation whereby members of a minority group have someone who looks like them in the public sphere and can influence mass public opinion.

A. Religion/Religiosity

Throughout the literature, religion, whether state institutionalization of religion or religiosity of the population, was almost always found as a significant factor in explaining varying policies and opinions on LGBTQIA+ rights and same-sex partnerships. Kollman (2007) and Corrales (2015) use a variable called "religiosity" to measure the strength of religious beliefs and behaviors within a country. Kollman (2007) finds this variable as a significant factor when examining the variation in support for SSU and SSM policies throughout Western democracies (Kollman 2007). In another study, Ogland and Verona (2014) also operationalize the variable of religion, which they call "devotion," as the frequency that the respondent attended religious services (1340). In the aforementioned studies these authors find that religion is one of the most important variables in determining individual support for both legalization of SSU or SSM and public opinion of same-sex relationships.

Other scholars that look at the effects of religion narrow their focus to look at how members of certain religious denominations could be more or less tolerant to certain policies and relationships (Corrales 2015; Fish 2005; Gaines and Garand 2010; Haider-Markel 2002; Ogland and Verona 2014; Reynolds 2013). Many of these scholars focus on religion as an avenue of opposition towards gay marriage policies (Friedman 2009; Herrick 2009). Herrick (2009) focuses on the contributions that religious organizations give to electoral campaigns and the effects that this then has on LGBTQIA+ support in the United States, while Gaines and Ganard (2010) focus instead on the different denominations of Protestantism and find that those who identify as Evangelical Protestant were statistically less likely to be in support of same-sex marriage. Also looking at religion, Ogland and Verona (2014) looks at the variance in public opinion of same-sex partnerships and same-sex unions (SSUs) in Brazil based on which religion, Catholicism, Protestantism or Afro-Brazilian traditions, and how devoted one is to a religion. They find that overall, those who were considered devoted Protestants, particularly Evangelicals, were the least likely to support partnerships or SSUs, while followers of Afro-Brazilian religions seem the least opposed out of the groups (Ogland & Verona 2014, 1346). Many other sources come to the same conclusion as Ogland and Verona (2014), that varying forms of Protestantism, especially Evangelical faiths, seem to be the most opposed to same-sex marriage policies (Corrales 2015; Encarnación 2011; Haider-Markel 2002).

Overall, religion has been found to be a main driver determining support for policy adoption. Thus, it will be important to control for religious factors, both religiosity of the population and the institutionalization of religion in case countries, especially because many countries in Latin America are highly religious (Pew 2018) . Although, Pettinicchio (2012) problematizes the distinctions and focus on religion by stating that “the way one conceptualizes

religion can produce different interpretations” (546). This argument should be considered in conceptualizing and operationalizing the control variable of religion.

“Top-Down” Approaches

The second camp of literature focuses on any argument about how systems of government affect policy outcomes. “Top-down” approaches vary from elected representatives and their actions in office to what type of electoral system that the country uses to elect officials. Within this camp, there are three main sub-categories that emerged: the institutional design of the electoral system, political party affiliation, and type of political representation of LGBTQIA+ officials.

I. Institutional Design of Electoral System

When focusing on the design of governmental institutions, there are two main elements that scholars argue can have an effect on policy adoption: the type of democratic government (Fish 2005; Friedman 2009) and the electoral system of the country (Reynolds 2013). These systems can account for not only what policies may be passed, but can also affect who is elected and the probability that a minority candidate is elected. Fish (2005) focuses his argument on whether or not the country in question as a unitary or federal system. He finds that in federal systems, same-sex civil union laws tend to be passed at the local levels as opposed to federal-level legislation (Fish 2005). On the other hand, scholar Friedman (2009) chose to instead focus on how presidential systems may change the ability to pass legislation. She states that in presidential systems of government, the main determining factor to the passage of a policy is the interest of the executive (Friedman 2009).

Other scholarship has approached this question by focusing on different types of electoral systems that may be used in a country, and seeing which system has a higher chance that a LGBTQIA+ representative is elected to office (Reynolds 2013). Reynolds (2013) examined the historical difference for proportional and majoritarian systems on the election of minority candidates to office and found that the electoral system matters in the election of gay members of parliament, specifically that, “MMP (Mixed-member Proportional) systems produce the highest proportions of gay MPs” (Reynolds 2013, 263). Reynolds (2013) also considers how the “level of democracy” of a country has on the election of gay MPs. Both Reynolds (2013) and Encarnación (2011) find that the age of a democracy needs to be considered when looking at the election of an out-representative.

II. The Role of Political Parties

Political party ideology is a prevalent factor throughout the existing literature. Most scholars measure this variable based on a left-right spectrum. Studies including this variable range from looking at specific legislator and their party affiliations (Haider-Markel 2002; Minta 2009) to looking at the majority ideology of the legislature at the time (Friedman 2009; Haider-Markel 2002; Minta and Sinclair-Chapman 2013; Reynolds 2013). Haider-Markel (2002) combines both of these approaches within his study by categorizing two different variables: legislator ideology and legislature ideology. In contrast, Minta and Sinclair-Chapman (2013) focus solely on a variable they deem “median ideological disposition” which looks at a median score for each chamber of the US legislature (131). Across all of these different approaches, there is one shared conclusion: left-leaning governments tend to be more supportive of LGBTQIA+ legislation and tend to elect more LGBTQIA+ legislators (Encarnación 2011; Friedman 2009; Haider-Markel 2002; Reynolds 2013).

Another focus of this sub-category of literature is on the importance of having some sort of elite support for the movement within the country, usually meaning an alliance between a social movement and a particular political party (Marsiaj 2006). In this existing literature many scholars argue that interactions between LGBTQIA+ rights movements and some sort of sympathetic elite is essential for policy change, but no literature has yet looked at any region outside of the “Western” world such as Latin America.

In his study, Marsiaj (2006) argues that parties and party support matters in terms of legislative change favoring sexual minorities (167). He concludes that while there are many aspects to the relationship between political parties and movements for sexual minority rights, “parties, especially on the left, represent an important vehicle for the construction of a more inclusive society” (Marsiaj 2006, 187). Encarnación (2011) is in agreement with Marsiaj (2006) and through his study of LGBTQIA+ rights in Latin America he finds that the movement has primarily allied itself with left-wing parties, when looking in a national context. Instead of limiting his view to solely political parties, Pettinicchio (2016) aims to study the importance that the relationship social movements have with what he calls “institutional activists” who can range from lobbyists to high-level government officials (176). Pettinicchio (2016) refers to this coalition of actors as a “strategic action field” and he argues that in policymaking, “political elites and social movement activists – socially skilled actors – enter into a symbiotic relationship” which leads to increased legitimacy and therefore the likeliness for policy change increases (181). In his previous work, Pettinicchio (2012) also argued that sympathetic policy elites can create windows for policy adoption that had not previously existed (537). Adapting Pettinicchio (2012)’s focus on policy elites, I am able to make inferences about the importance of

a LGBTQIA+ representative, as an advocate for a social movement and connect it with ideas of Social Contact Theory.

III. Political Representation

Representation arguments are some of the most common topics when looking at advancing minority rights. In a foundational work on the subject, Pitkin (1967) divides the concept of representation into three main types: formalistic, descriptive and symbolic. Progressing from her ideas, scholars have expanded the categories of representation to include surrogate representation as well. In the existing literature, most of the work looking at minorities has focused on race and gender, with very few looking into the ideas of sexual orientation, therefore, this study seeks to address this uncharted territory.

Descriptive representation was the most common form throughout the literature. This concept is defined primarily as, “the extent to which a representative or legislative body resembles a given constituent and her social or demographic identities” (Hayes and Hibbing 2017, 33). This definition usually does not take into account policy outcomes that may come from said representative, but is used in the basis for many arguments when looking at policy. The common argument that occurs throughout the literature is that descriptive representation is an avenue for substantive representation, or the amount to which representation is translated into policies affecting the represented group. Scholars have looked at this idea in relation to women (Weldon 2002), racial minority groups (Gamble 2007; Harden and Clark 2016; Hayes and Hibbing 2017; Minta 2009; Minta and Sinclair-Chapman 2013; Sanchez and Morin 2011), and few have begun to consider sexual orientation (Haider-Markel 2002; Haider-Markel, Joslyn, and Kniss 2000; Hansen and Treul 2015; Herrick 2009; Reynolds 2013). All of the aforementioned sources found the existence of a member of a minority group within a legislature to be a

significant factor for increasing the rights of said group, but not always through the adoption of policies. Haider-Markel, Joslyn, and Kniss (2000) looked specifically at the influences of gay representatives in the US and the passage of domestic partnership laws, while Gamble (2007) focuses on how Black representatives in the US interact on various committees within the legislature. They both found that identity of a legislator played a significant role on their actions and passage of legislation within a legislature.

Other forms of representation that were discussed in the literature were surrogate and symbolic representation. Surrogate representation can be defined as when a legislator works to represent not only their constituency, but a certain community as a whole. One example is when a LGBTQIA+ legislators act as a spokesperson, or surrogate, for the entire LGBTQIA+ community within their country. This form of representation focuses on the relationship between a minority representative and their relation to the minority group as a whole, irrespective of whether the citizen is a constituent of the legislator (Herrick 2009). Herrick (2009) looks at whether GLB (gay, lesbian, and bisexual) legislators were likely to become surrogate representatives for the entire LGBTQIA+ community as opposed to just representing their constituency. These outcomes could vary based on the demands of each group and the makeup of the population within the two different populations. She finds GLB representatives are more likely to become surrogate candidates than their predecessors and concludes that the best way to advance GLB rights, in the United States, is through the election of GLB candidates (Herrick 2009).

Hansen and Treul (2015) describe Pitkin's (1967) definition of symbolic representation as a form of representation in which the representative does not need to, "act in a way that furthers the interests of the represented" but it only requires the group to believe that they are

being represented in some way (957). Symbolic representation can be looked at as a way that representatives may change the political attitudes of their represented group as well as how the group views itself, without the need for any action (Sanchez and Morin 2011). Hansen and Treul (2015) define levels of symbolic representation through their variable named “Position Taking” which looked at representatives in the US House and their record on gay rights issues, such as their stances on bill sponsorship and voting within the institution (959).

Surrogate representation focuses on the relationship between a minority representative and their relation to the minority group as a whole, irrespective of whether the citizen is a constituent of the legislator (Herrick 2009). Herrick (2009) looks at whether GLB (gay, lesbian, and bisexual) legislators were likely to become surrogate representatives for the entire LGBTQIA+ community as opposed to just representing their constituency. These outcomes could vary based on the demands of each group and the makeup of the population within the two different populations. She finds GLB representatives are more likely to become surrogate candidates than their predecessors and concludes that the best way to advance GLB rights, in the United States, is through the election of GLB candidates (Herrick 2009).

Critiques and Hypothesis

For each set of literature, there various critiques that can be made. The one main critique of both top-down and bottom-up camps of literature is the lack of inclusion of Latin American countries. A majority of the studies focused on Western Europe, Canada, or the United States. The studies that have included Latin American countries only mention them in passing or do not have any systematic data for the many ways the population can affect same-sex domestic policies. Much of the existing work that does include the region focuses solely on religion and its effects, and while this variable is very important in the Latin American context there are many

variables that should also be considered. The most important literature for my study is that which focuses on representation in its various forms. In order to justify the causal mechanism of my hypothesis, I have to take into account the idea of surrogate representation and its role in changing a population's views towards a certain community. In order to fill a gap in the literature, I am going to focus my hypothesis on public opinion of same-sex marriage laws only within Latin America. This hypothesis will be expanded upon in the next chapter, *Chapter 3: Methods*, but as a preview, I hypothesize

H1: The election of a LGBTQIA+ representative to federal office will increase the percentage of the population with positive views towards pro-LGBTQIA+ policies.

Chapter 3: Methods

The main objective of this study is to discern the effects that a LGBTQIA+ representative in federal office has on public opinion towards same-sex marriage rights. The main research question that this study seeks to address is: why have some LGBTQIA+ rights movements succeeded in some Latin American countries, but failed in others? Efforts to assess the influence of social movements is a complicated endeavor as the literature has varying definitions of what success entails. For this study, I am only defining success as moving mass public opinion in the direction of greater acceptance surrounding LGBTQIA+ rights issues. I know that this definition is limited in its scope, but due to time constraints I chose to keep this definition as simple as possible. This aspect may not be *sufficient* to proclaim success, but is a *necessary* first step for the movement to reach their larger stated goals. This definition will be further operationalized as my dependent variable.

My singular independent variable is the presence of a LGBTQIA+ representative within the federal legislature of a country. A LGBTQIA+ representative can be defined as any elected political representative who has publically acknowledged their sexual orientation as non-heterosexual or has identified with a gender that is not that which they were assigned at birth (not cis-gendered). A legislator is considered to fit this definition if at any time throughout their life they have spoken about these issues publically, whether in their campaign speeches or in interviews with media outlets. Drawing off of the following variables, I have one main hypothesis which is dependent on a specific theoretical framework.

Social Contact Theory

Based on previous scholarship, there is one overarching theory that drives both of my hypotheses, Social Contact Theory. Originally defined by Allport (1979) this theory seeks to explain factors that may influence one group's perception of another. There are generally thought to be two groups within a populace, the "in-group" and the "out-group." Within typical power structures the "in-group" generally translates into the dominant group within a population. Social Contact Theory states that an "in-group" will have more favorable views towards the "out-group" when they have some sort of direct contact with one of the group's members (Allport 1979). Within the population of a country, one can interpret this theory to mean that members of a dominant group will have more favorable views towards a minority group if they have some form of direct contact with its members. In my study the "in-group" or dominant group are considered to be those who identify as heterosexual, while the "out-group" includes anyone who self-identifies with a sexual orientation or gender that differ from this norm.

For my analysis, I will be applying contact theory in an indirect way. My analysis is based on the claim that electing a LGBTQIA+ representative provides a form contact that works through the use of surrogate representation (Herrick 2009). Surrogate representation occurs when a minority elected official represents their entire minority group within the country. In my case, a LGBTQIA+ representative represents the entire LGBTQIA+ community within the country in addition to representing their constituents. One example of this effect could be Angélica Lozano Correa from Colombia who was originally from the Bogotá area, but can be seen as representing the entire LGBTQIA+ community of Colombia (Corrales, 2015). This bottom-up, or mass populace, approach to social contact theory comes into play based on the public nature of a federal representative. The election of the first LGBTQIA+ representative within the country can

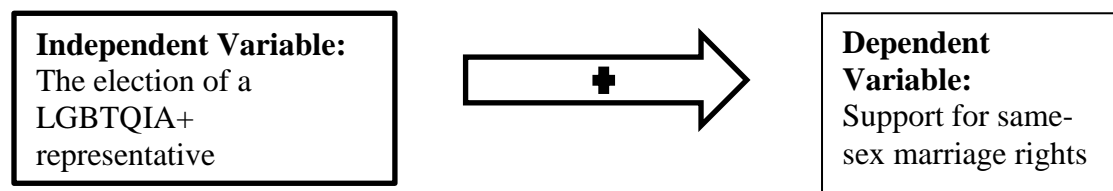
be considered a historic first that will attract large amounts of media country. The high level of attention paid to this event adds to the possibility that members of the LGBTQIA+ community within the country will become aware of the election of a surrogate representative. In this case the contact that the population has is mainly visual and focused within the media, whether print or online forms. As an elected representative at the federal level, many actions are more public (or receive more attention) than those of representatives at lower levels of government. Most importantly for my research question, their election affects those *outside* the LGBTQIA+ community. When the outside populace sees said official as a member representing the LGBTQIA+ community, they will then have the necessary psychological encounter through news reports that may shape their opinions on issues regarding sexual minority group rights. The election of a LGBTQIA+ representative normalizes their presence in positions of political power, and, by extension, the right of the LGBTQIA+ communities to have a voice in federal legislatures. This indirect contact method was used in a previous study by Carlo-Gonzalez, McKallagat, and Whitten-Woodring (2017) that examines how access to the internet can influence views on gay rights. In their study, the authors mainly focus on the organization of LGBTQIA+ advocates online, but also mention that the widespread availability of news sources online may also affect gay rights. Media coverage and its inclusion of different groups and historic events, such as the election of a LGBTQIA+ representative, can influence overall opinions on the rights of groups who have been historically marginalized from political debates.

Hypothesis

I hypothesize that the election of a LGBTQIA+ representative will lead to a shift in public opinion towards pro-LGBTQIA+ rights laws. This hypothesis is based primarily off of an indirect form of social contact theory—based on the interaction between “in-groups” and “out-

groups.” “In-group” members are typically considered to be in the dominant groups within a power hierarchy. In traditional understanding of the social contact process, contact begins with a member of a dominant group has direct contact with a member of a minority group (Allport 1979). My assumption is that because elected officials are subjected to high amounts of publicity, the population will have more contact (albeit indirect) with a member of the LGBTQIA+ community than prior to their election. I believe this will function regardless of whether the LGBTQIA+ representative is actively advocating for increased LGBTQIA+ rights or not, because the populace still have a face to associate with the community.

Figure 1. Causal Pathway Flow Chart



I plan to measure the presence or absence of this variable in four ways. The first two measures are: (1) whether or not a country has *ever* had a LGBTQIA+ official and (2) whether a country *currently* has a LGBTQIA+ official within their legislature. Both of these variables will be measured dichotomously with zero indicating the absence of said LGBTQIA+ representative. The remaining two measures will be count variables measuring both (3) the total number of LGBTQIA+ officials that have *ever* served in the legislature and (4) the number of LGBTQIA+ representatives that are *currently* serving in a legislature in any given year. I have coded the year of a LGBTQIA+ representative based on data by Javier Corrales (2015) for the LGBT Representation and Rights Initiative at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

To test this hypothesis, I will conduct a large-N statistical analysis of preexisting data collected through the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP). The LAPOP survey

occurs bi-yearly in every country in Latin America, Canada, and the United States. The administrators of the survey collect information via in-person interviews at the respondent's residence. The LAPOP uses a random stratified sampling method to arrive at a representative sample of each country's population of voting age adults, which is voting-age adults. For my analysis, I will be using survey data from the 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2016 rounds of surveys because they include a question specifically focused on approval of same-sex marriages. The 2010 survey was stratified by the country's major regions and municipalities that were categorized as either urban or rural. Beginning in 2012, another level of stratification was added to include: the size of the municipality. The per-country samples range from 1,410 to 3,029, with most of the samples falling around 1,500 participants. For each survey wave, the samples all have approximately a ± 2.5 percent sampling error.

I will be using twelve Latin American countries, based on whether or not they have Spanish as a national language and the available data I have through the survey. I chose to exclude Caribbean countries from my study due to their distinct cultural differences from the region. Also, I chose not to include countries whose primary language was something other than Spanish in order to keep my cases as similar as possible on their colonial backgrounds. This will exclude Belize, Suriname, Guyana, and French Guinea. In my analysis, I will be using the "Grand Merge File" that includes a selected number of countries and is available for free users of the survey. Due to the selection of what countries and years are included within this file, I was only able to gather full data from eleven countries. These eleven countries will be the basis of my analysis. The countries are: Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay. For these countries, I collected the responses for each country on a number of control variables as well as one question of interest.

Since the 2010 LAPOP survey, a question on the subject's views of same-sex marriage is included. This question states, "How strongly do you approve or disapprove of same-sex couples having the right to marry?" (Methods and Practices n.d.). This question was asked to all respondents in the survey waves, or year, except for the year 2012. In 2012, only odd numbered participants were given this specific question, therefore making the total observation number smaller in the year. Each respondent was then asked to rate their approval on a scale from 1-10, with 1 being "Strongly Disapprove" and 10 meaning "Strongly Approve." This 10-point scale is problematic due to the large number of choices, but I kept the original scale to stay true to the data.

In order to capture the change in public opinion that is occurring within a country, I plan to conduct a comparison of means test for each of the countries across the four different survey waves to see if there is a significant change across years with particular attention paid to the presence or absence of a LGBTQIA+ representatives in the legislature. I will then run multivariate analysis on all of the countries within my study, including various control variables that have been found as relevant factors by the previous literature to see whether a LGBTQIA+ legislator has a significant effect on the survey respondents' views on same-sex rights.

Within my multivariate analyses, I will be controlling for various demographic factors that have been argued to possibly effect public opinion on LGBTQIA+ issues, such as: sex, age, religion, religiosity, and years of education. All of these variables are previously defined and measured through the LAPOP survey. Certain demographic factors have been believed to drastically shift an individual's feelings on certain issues. These factors have been discussed previously in the early section of my literature review. Sex and age are both ratio variables, while religion is a categorical variable based on different religious denominations. Religiosity is

measured by using two different ordinal variables, one to show how frequently the respondent attends religious services and the second to report how important the respondent would say religion is in their life. The variable for education is measured as a ratio value in which the respondent gives the total number of years of education that they have completed. Exact measurement of each control variable is explained within the appendix.

One variable that has been found to be important within previous studies is that of political ideology. Within the existing LAPOP survey, a political ideological scale question is only asked in the English-speaking countries. The survey does include a variable on political party affiliation that may allow inferences to political ideology, but because the parties are all unique to each individual country there is no real way that I can create and implement a political scale that would be universal for all countries involved. Due to lack of data and time available for my study, I will instead use two existing variables as a proxy measure. These variables are how the respondent rates their interest in politics and the respondent's marital status. Interest in politics can measure the respondent's involvement in politics which could influence their choices on political policies. Interest in politics is measured as a frequency scale from "1. A lot" to "4. None" ("LAPOP: Country, 2014."). This is then recoded in reverse to make more sense. Marriage status can act as a proxy measure for traditional views within the population due to the historical relation to heterosexual marriage and religion. Marriage status and its effects on same-sex marriage views was previously studied by Gaines and Garand (2010) in a US context and was found to not be a significant factor in influencing views towards same-sex marriage policies. Although it was not significant in the aforementioned study, I believe that this variable is important in a Latin American context due to the region's trend towards higher levels of religiosity. This variable could be associated highly with religion within the region. It is

important for me to consider these variables in order to avoid any possible lurking variable interactions within the relationship between my independent and dependent variables. My next step in my study is the analysis of results for my multi-variate statistical analysis, which will be continued in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Quantitative Analysis

Introduction

Based on my overview of the previous scholarship, I would expect to find a positive change in public opinion towards same-sex marriage policy because of the presence of a LGBTQIA+ elected federal representative. To begin, I first analyze the possibility of any direction change in support for same-sex marriage policies of my eleven countries of interest in Latin America over the different survey waves. I created my own variable for each country-wave of the survey to run a regression analysis on each particular country of interest to determine if there was a significant increase or decrease in their mean support for same-sex marriage over the course of four different survey waves: 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2016.

Figure 2. Comparison of Means Test on Same-Sex Marriage Support in Latin America (2010-2016)

<u>Countries</u>	<u>Survey Wave</u>			
	<u>2010</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2016</u>
<i>Colombia</i>	4.09	4.30	4.13	4.06
<i>Costa Rica</i>	2.86	3.00	3.54*°	4.15*°+
<i>El Salvador</i>	1.92	1.90	2.26*°	2.67*°+
<i>Guatemala</i>	2.49	2.45	1.97*°	3.09 *°+
<i>Honduras</i>	3.03	2.34*	2.27*	2.93°+
<i>Mexico</i>	4.40	5.09 *	4.89*	5.60*°+
<i>Nicaragua</i>	2.40	2.73*	2.30°	3.21*°+
<i>Panama</i>	3.05	2.75	3.25°	2.95
<i>Paraguay</i>	2.44	2.45	2.87*°	3.35*°+
<i>Peru</i>	3.36	3.07	3.37°	3.37 °
<i>Uruguay</i>	5.54	7.04*	7.36*	7.71 *°+

Legend

* = $p \leq 0.05$ from 2010

° = $p \leq 0.05$ from 2012

+ = $p \leq 0.05$ from 2014

MEAN = presence of a LGBTQIA+ representative

Figure 2 displays the mean score for each country and each survey year, while accounting for significance and the presence of a LGBTQIA+ representative. Across all of the models run, there is a significant positive trend of progressivism within the region, but this trend is far from settled due to the extreme variation of means. I discovered that in the over-time analyses, a majority of countries displayed a significant increase in support for same-sex marriage over time, but roughly 27 percent of countries showed no change and one showed significant change towards opposition of same-sex marriage. From this chart, I was able to draw a few interesting findings. One positive case for my hypothesis is that of Costa Rica. Costa Rica had its first LGBTQIA+ representative serve from 2010-2014 but when looking at significant changes in mean approval there is a large, significant increase compared to other countries in my study. These significant changes even continued through 2016, during which the LGBTQIA+ representative was no longer in office. A case that was contrary to my current hypothesis is that of Nicaragua, whose mean increased significantly over time, but this country has never had a LGBTQIA+ representative within their federal legislature. The Nicaraguan case leads me think about what other possible factors must be occurring within this country for a significant increase in average same-sex marriage approval among its citizens.

Another interesting result from Figure 2 is the lack of change seen in Colombia and Panama. Both of these countries show little to no change on the mean approval rating of same-sex marriage over the passage of time. The lack of change within these countries provides further support for my hypothesis due to this evidence showing that the passage of time does not uniformly affect each country's opinions on same-sex marriage. The overall trend of increased support in many of the countries in Latin America could support the alternative hypothesis that this support is growing regardless of the election of a LGBTQIA+ representative. However,

these two cases show that this trend is not uniform, and that time is not the only factor affecting progressive views. These results provide a baseline of change that is important for interpreting my multi-country regression analysis.

I proceed by discussing some important features based on the basic descriptive statistics of the respondents of the survey. This step provides a picture of the most common type of person and the spread in demographics that the survey covers. I will also provide the spread of different variables to show a fuller picture of all of the responded values. After running my descriptive statistics to check the robustness of the data, I then ran four different multi-variate ordered logistical models in order to test my first hypothesis. I ran four different models due to the interaction effects that exist between my four measures of my independent variable of interest, the presence of a LGBTQIA+ elected federal official. Each multi-variate model includes only one of the possible four measures for a LGBTQIA+ representative to minimize interaction effects between variables. At the conclusion of this chapter there will be a discussion section that seeks to address larger trends that are found in the region through my analysis and the larger implications of my findings.

Descriptive Statistics

The charts below, Tables 1 and 2, display various forms of descriptive statistics as a way to show the average survey participant and what their general responses are for my control variables in question. I also include information on how common or uncommon my four measures of my independent variable are in the eleven countries. These four measures are: the existence of any LGBTQIA+ representative in the federal legislature any time before or during the survey year, whether or not the LGBTQIA+ representative is serving in the legislature in the

survey year, the total number of LGBTQIA+ representatives the country has ever had, and the total number of LGBTQIA+ representatives serving their terms during the survey year.

Table 1: Demographic Summary of Survey Respondents

Age (mean # of years)			39.3
		% of respondents	Total # of respondents
Gender	Male	49.06	105,544
	Female	50.94	109,600
Education (years)	None	4.20	8,791
	1	1.49	3,117
	2	2.67	5,584
	3	4.00	8,357
	4	3.62	7,563
	5	4.12	8,621
	6	12.78	26,727
	7	3.17	6,633
	8	5.12	10,700
	9	8.21	17,172
	10	5.88	12,307
	11	12.29	25,713
	12	13.32	27,854
	13	3.69	7,713
	14	3.86	8,075
	15	3.24	6,777
	16	3.40	7,113
	17	2.28	4,765
	18+	2.67	5,582
Marital Status	Single	33.22	69,027
	Not Single	66.78	138,774
Follower of a Christian (non-Catholic) religion?	Protestant, Evangelical, other	33.42	37,731
	Not of a Christian (non-Catholic) Religion or Catholic	66.58	75,157
Catholic?	Yes	52.5	59,589
	No, other	47.5	53,299
Follower of a non-Christian religion or do they identify as atheist/agnostic?	Yes	13.79	15,568
	No	86.21	97,320
Religiosity – How often do you attend religious services?	Never or almost never	19.05	21,373
	Once or twice a year	13.83	15,521
	Once a month	19.60	21,985
	Once a week	28.87	32,389
	More than once a week	18.65	20,921
Importance of Religion (in respondent's life)	Not important	5.22	6,055
	A little important	8.19	9,502
	Somewhat important	22.23	25,797
	Very important	64.36	74,688
Interest in Politics	None	34.76	64,558
	A little	34.58	64,237
	Some	20.80	38,638
	A lot	9.86	18,306

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Variables		Mean	Mode	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	Total # of observations
Dependent Variable	Approval of Same-sex Marriage	3.04	1	3.09	0	10	99,393
Independent Variables	Has the country ever had a LGBTQIA+ representative?	0.31	0	0.46	0	1	68,700
	Does the country have a LGBTQIA+ rep. in year of survey?	0.22	0	0.41	0	1	68,700
	Total number of LGBTQIA+ representatives before year of survey?	0.54	0	0.98	0	3	68,700
	Total number of LGBTQIA+ representatives in legislature at time of survey?	0.28	0	0.605	0	2	68,700
Control Variables	Age	39.30	18	15.81	16	101	212,937
	Gender	0.49	Female (0)	0.50	0	1	215,144
	Education (years)	9.13	12	4.44	0	18	209,164
	Does the respondent belong to a Christian (non-Catholic) religion?	0.33	Catholic or other non-Christian religion (0)	0.47	0	1	112,888
	Is the respondent Catholic?	0.525	Catholic (1)	0.499	0	1	112,888
	Does the respondent belong to a non-Christian religion or identify as atheist/agnostic?	0.14	Christian religion (0)	0.344	0	1	112,888
	Religiosity of respondent (Frequency of service attendance)	3.14	4	1.38	0	5	112,189
	How important is religion?	3.46	4	0.85	0	4	116,042
	Marital Status (Single or no)	0.33	Not Single (0)	0.47	0	1	207,801
	How interested in politics is the respondent?	2.06	0	0.97	0	4	185,739

Based on the above statistics, I found that the average respondent to my survey is a 32-year-old female who is not single and has at least twelve years of completed education². Also, the average respondent belongs to a Christian religious denomination, which is most likely Catholicism. This hypothetical respondent attends church once a week and states that religion is very important in their life. They are a little interested in politics. Knowing the average respondent to this survey paints a visual picture to the survey questions, which is important in interpreting the data and implications of the data analysis.

Before running my full analysis, I first needed to run a test for possible multicollinearity. After running a correlation matrix amongst my independent and control variables, the only correlated variables were my measures of my independent variable. Due to their high correlation coefficients, I decided to run four different models with each model only including one measure of my independent variable. These models will allow me to analyze the independent effects that each measure of the presence of a LGBTQIA+ legislator has on approval of same-sex marriage.

Results

I hypothesize that the presence of a LGBTQIA+ representative in the federal legislature will increase support for policies surrounding LGBTQIA+ rights. In my study I specifically look at this effect in relation to one's approval or disapproval of same-sex marriage. To study the causal link between my variables of interest, while controlling for possible intervening factors, I ran four different multi-variate ordered logistical regressions, shown below in Table 3. Included in all of the models was a variable that accounts for a change over time, or the survey year. I created dichotomous measures of each year with reference to 2010 so that change over time can be shown within the model.

² For this summary statement, I chose to list the mean age of the respondent as the average age. It is important to note that there is a large spread in ages for the survey and the mode age for participants was 18.

After running all four models, I found that all variables that I included were significant, but each causes a less than one unit increase in approval. The significance of each of my four measures for my independent variables allows me to reject my null hypothesis that there is no relationship between the presence of a LGBTQIA+ representative and public approval of same-sex marriage. Each of my independent variables has a positive coefficient showing a positive relationship. The most potent of the independent variables is whether or not the country has ever had a LGBTQIA+ representative. If a country has had a LGBTQIA+ representative, then public support will increase by 0.505 approval points, measured on a ten-point scale.

Another important independent variable is the total number of LGBTQIA+ representatives a country has had, which is positively significant. Based on the statistical results, the election of each additional representative yields 0.229 change in approval for same-sex marriage. Countries like Mexico that has had three LGBTQIA+ representatives witnessed a magnified effect, shown in the change in mean in Figure 2. This suggests that this independent variable captures a significant cumulative effect of electing more than one LGBTQIA+ official. This index measure shows that there is a compounding effect when one or more LGBTQIA+ representatives is elected. These significant changes show that just the presence of a LGBTQIA+ representative, or multiple representatives, has an effect on public support for same-sex marriage. Both variables measuring whether or not there is a LGBTQIA+ official at the time of the survey were also significant and had a positive effect on the public's opinions towards same-sex marriage.

Table 3: Effects of a LGBTQIA+ federal representative on public support for same-sex marriage – Multi-variate Ologit Regression Models

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Ever had a LGBTQIA+ representative	0.505*** (0.0304)			
Has a LGBTQIA+ representative at time of survey		0.311*** (0.0338)		
Total number of LGBTQIA+ representatives ever in the country			0.229*** (0.0122)	
Total number of LGBTQIA+ representatives in legislature in survey year				0.111*** (0.0218)
Age	-0.0112*** (0.000738)	-0.0108*** (0.000731)	-0.0109*** (0.000734)	-0.0106*** (0.000731)
Male	-0.535*** (0.0196)	-0.536*** (0.0195)	-0.537*** (0.0196)	-0.538*** (0.0194)
Single	0.152*** (0.0219)	0.147*** (0.0219)	0.159*** (0.0218)	0.144*** (0.218)
Years of Education Completed	0.0340*** (0.00297)	0.0339*** (0.00293)	0.0332*** (0.00295)	0.0336*** (0.00296)
Religious Denomination				
Christian non-Catholic (reference Catholic)	-0.636*** (0.0296)	-0.651*** (0.0296)	-0.601*** (0.0297)	-0.652*** (0.0297)
Non-Christian (reference Catholic)	0.143*** (0.0388)	0.112** (0.0391)	0.160*** (0.0393)	0.0985* (0.0393)
Church Attendance	-0.173*** (0.00979)	-0.173*** (0.00976)	-0.175*** (0.00978)	-0.172*** (0.00974)
Importance of religion	-0.352*** (0.0161)	-0.369*** (0.0161)	-0.350*** (0.0162)	-0.378*** (0.0162)
Interest in Politics	0.188*** (0.0113)	0.189*** (0.0113)	0.188*** (0.0114)	0.189*** (0.0113)
2012 (reference 2010)	0.136** (0.0453)	0.138** (0.0449)	0.136** (0.0451)	0.142** (0.0449)
2014 (reference 2010)	0.110 (0.0846)	0.270** (0.0847)	0.159 (0.0829)	0.335*** (0.0858)
2016 (reference 2010)	0.199*** (0.0345)	0.333*** (0.0349)	0.280*** (0.0340)	0.363*** (0.0355)
<i>N</i>	40,874	40,874	40,874	40,874
<i>Prob > F</i>	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Significance levels: *p<.05; **p<0.01, ***p>0.001. Robust standard errors in parentheses.				

Other interesting findings within my analysis can be found by looking at my control variables. My findings for my religious variables support the findings in Ogland and Verona (2014) that those who belonged to Christian religions tended to have lower levels of support for same-sex partnership laws compared to non-Christians. I also found that amongst Christian denominations, those who identified as Catholic actually had higher levels of support for same-sex couples than Protestant religions (Ogland and Verona 2014). These authors speculate that increased Catholic support for same-sex partnership laws could come from the election of Pope Francis, but they do not test this theory (Ogland and Verona 2014). I believe that due to the more progressive views of Pope Francis, this could have had an effect on majority Catholic populations of Latin America. My two other measures involving religions, church attendance and religious importance, were also significant. My results showed that the more a person states that they attend church, then the less supportive they are of same-sex marriage. This also occurs with my religious importance variable. Participants who rated religion as very important to them rated their support of same-sex marriage lower than others. The significance of these variables was to be expected, due to a general trend of high religiosity within Latin America (Pew 2018).

Other control variables appeared to be significant in the direction that would be expected based on overall general knowledge and the previous body of literature. Younger participants had higher support for same-sex marriage than those of their older counterparts. This fits with the general consensus that younger populations tend to be more progressive. Also, the more education a participant had, the higher their support was for same-sex marriage. Education tends to have this effect because more education provides the participant with increased knowledge on social rights topics. Also, institutions of higher education tend to be more progressive in their

views and more political than lower education. One of the most interesting control variable results was the effect of a participant's interest in politics. This variable can act as a proxy measure for indirect social contact theory, due to the assumption that if an individual is more interested in politics they may seek out more political media. This increased political media intake will expose them to news on any elected LGBTQIA+ representative. I found that participants who described themselves as being very interested in politics had higher support levels of same-sex marriage. This variable supports the argument behind social contact theory, even when contact occurs in an indirect manner.

Overall, my analysis allows me to reject my null hypothesis even after controlling for various factors. It is true of many public opinions and attitudes that they are partially explained by an array of factors, which is shown by the significance of all the variables within my study. This does not allow me to pinpoint any one variable and no one variable has a significantly larger effect on my dependent variable. The only statement I am able to make is that many factors are significant when looking at a population's approval rate for same-sex marriage, including my independent variables. In this case, as to be expected, opinions on same-sex marriage not only have to do with the election of LGBTQIA+ officials but also with a host of demographic factors within the population.

Single-Country Models

In order to expand the scope and understanding of my topic, I decided to run eleven different ordered logistic multi-variate regressions. Each regression is only on one country of interest within my study. Within this section, I am going to discuss a few countries that showed interesting diversions from the multi-country results, for all country results please see the appendix. Due to the country level analysis of my independent variable, many countries had

measures that did not change throughout the survey waves. The countries who have never had LGBTQIA+ officials, and consequentially none of the independent variable measures have had any change let alone significant change, are: El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and Paraguay. Conversely, some countries (Mexico and Costa Rica) had a LGBTQIA+ representative for all years of the survey so the only variables that can be measured for change are those measuring the presence of said representative in office during the survey wave.

After running all of my single country analyses, I found that I only had six countries that changed at all on their independent variables. Within these six, I decided to focus on Guatemala, Uruguay, and Peru because they follow similar patterns in the sequence and timing of their LGBTQIA+ representatives. Given that each of these countries only had a LGBTQIA+ representative in the 2016 survey wave, I can better isolate the effect of the election of LGBTQIA+ representatives. Because these three countries followed a similar pattern of electing their first and only LGBTQIA+ representative in 2016, I can omit yearly controls because my key independent variable captures the change between 2014 and 2016. No country in the model had more than one elected official at any time, which allows me to omit the count independent variables within the model.

Table 4: Single Countries Multi-variate Ologit Regression Model

		Guatemala	Peru	Uruguay
Has a LGBTQIA+ representative at time of survey		0.283** (0.0853)	0.0141 (0.0720)	1.078*** (0.0869)
Age		-0.0136*** (0.00283)	-0.0109*** (0.00228)	-0.0215*** (0.00222)
Male		-0.444*** (0.0724)	-0.407*** (0.0655)	-0.728*** (0.0719)
Single		0.311** (0.0946)	0.314*** (0.0704)	0.207* (0.0802)
Years of Education Completed		-0.0219* (0.00913)	0.0392*** (0.00928)	0.0825*** (0.00960)
Religious Denomination	Christian non-Catholic (reference Catholic)	-0.482*** (0.0812)	-0.785*** (0.108)	-0.659*** (0.0878)
	Non-Christian (reference Catholic)	-0.681*** (0.200)	0.262 (0.149)	0.203* (0.0845)
Church Attendance		-0.182*** (0.0299)	-0.108*** (0.0307)	-0.253*** (0.0427)
Importance of religion		-0.142 (0.0754)	-0.184*** (0.0500)	-0.107* (0.0440)
Interest in Politics		0.191*** (0.0402)	0.125*** (0.0368)	0.277*** (0.0364)
<i>N</i>		3,363	4,430	3,516
<i>Prob > F</i>		0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Significance levels: *p<.05; **p<0.01, ***p>0.001. Robust standard errors in parentheses.				

Based on the results of Table 6, the presence of a LGBTQIA+ representative was significant in two out of the three countries, with the outlier being Peru. In order to discover the reason behind this lack of significance, a study would have to be done on the specific time period within Peru and why this presence might have had no effect. Another interesting finding within Peru was that the non-Christian religious variable was not significant. This same variable was also moving in different directions in Guatemala and Uruguay. In Guatemala, identifying as non-

Christian, agnostic, or atheist significantly decreased support for same-sex marriage. In Uruguay, this variable moved the same direction as the full country model, meaning that if you identified as non-Christian, then it significantly increased support. I would hypothesize that the lack of significance or negative relationship stems from the very few respondents that responded that they identify as non-Christian. Overall, the findings within Guatemala and Uruguay supported my hypothesis. In both cases, the election of a LGBTQIA+ representative is positively significant. The independent variable in the Uruguay model has a much higher magnitude of effect, 1.078, than both the three other models and the full country model shown in Table 3. All other variables in these two models are moving in the same direction as the larger countries model and all are significant. The only contradictory finding was that of education in Guatemala which showed that increases in education was associated with less support. I would guess that this is due to a small number of participants with high levels of education within the country.

I also ran multi-variate analyses for each of the eleven countries (analysis for remaining eight countries not shown). I found two countries where my independent variables had the opposite relationship than I hypothesized. In both Costa Rica and Mexico, the measure looking at whether or not the country has a LGBTQIA+ representative at the time of the survey wave had a significant negative relationship with attitudes towards same-sex marriage. In the case of Mexico and Costa Rica, when there was a LGBTQIA+ representative in office the population rated their approval of same-sex marriage lower. In both of these cases, the LGBTQIA+ representative is in office during the early survey waves. It appears that for these two countries mean approval for same-sex marriage improves over time, therefore, having LGBTQIA+ representatives in the beginning may just be intervening with the time variable. One other possibility is a possible

legacy effect. This legacy effect focuses on how the LGBTQIA+ representative is remembered and therefore increased positive attitudes towards the LGBTQIA+ community as a whole.

Discussion

This study sought to discover a relationship between LGBTQIA+ representatives that serve in federal legislatures and their effect on public opinion towards LGBTQIA+ issues within Latin American countries. My hopes through discovering this relationship was to identify a possible way that LGBTQIA+ interest groups can garner more support for same- sex marriage within the general population. Marginalized groups that are seeking justice for their respective causes must make a choice about strategy. My findings indicate that pursuing an electoral strategy to elect more LGBTQIA+ members is a fruitful avenue for meeting the goals of the movement.

Through my longitudinal comparison of means test, the multi-variate multi-country model, and my single country models there were some apparent trends that can be discussed throughout the region. With a few exceptions, the region of Latin America is moving in the direction of progressivism on same-sex partnership rights. This push can be seen as one that is historically popular at the moment and highly relevant to today's politics. In order to better contextualize this movement for myself and my fellow American readers, I did some cursory work focusing on the number of LGBTQIA+ federal legislators within the United States and found that there has been a long history. The first LGBTQIA+ federal legislator, at the time of their election campaign, in the US was elected in 1999 (Grinberg 2012). This has then led to various legislators disclosing their personal sexual orientations and fighting for LGBTQIA+ legislation in office. The election of LGBTQIA+ representatives in Latin America appears to be a relatively new phenomenon with many countries electing their first LGBTQIA+ representative

within the past five years. Due to this recent increase in representation, I believe that this serves as a sign of movement towards a more progressive outcome in the region.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This study sought to answer the question of why some LGBTQIA+ movements in Latin America have succeeded while others have not. From this question, I developed a hypothesis looking at success as defined by progressive public opinion of same-sex marriage within a country. I hypothesized that the election of a LGBTQIA+ representative to the federal legislature will lead to increased approval for same-sex marriage policies by the populace. My hypothesis rested on previous scholarship that studied LGBTQIA+ representatives within the US context as well as the few that study the region of Latin America. I based my assumption on an indirect form of social contact theory that is driven by the media coverage of a LGBTQIA+ representative that provides the country with a face for the LGBTQIA+ community. This available connection to the community provides the population with indirect contact that I hypothesize will then change their views on issues surrounding the LGBTQIA+ community.

Through the statistical analysis of existing survey data from 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2016, I was able to confirm my hypothesis for the region as a whole. In the full multi-variate ordered logistical regression, all of the measures of my independent variables capturing the election of LGBTQIA+ elected officials were significant in increasing the public opinion towards same-sex marriage. I also discovered that all of my control variables were also significant and influenced an individual's support for gay rights. Many of my findings supported previous studies that looked at the effect of demographics and age on public opinion towards the LGBTQIA+ community. These findings include that those who identified as female and participants who were younger tended to be more supportive of same-sex marriage. One of the most important control variables within my study were the various that focused on religion and religiosity. I found that in the region as a whole, participants who identified as Protestant were more likely to

oppose same-sex marriage, when compared to Catholics. This control variable was interesting due to the traditional Catholic roots of Latin America (NW, Washington, and Inquiries 2014).

Drawbacks

Due to the time limitations, my topic, and the availability of data there are a few drawbacks within my study. My analysis is able to provide overall statistical data, but lacks specific causal relationships that could provide more context and policy recommendations. One thing my study can do is show that overall in the region of Latin America, there is a trend towards progressivism around LGBTQIA+ rights and that it is related, at least in part, to the election of LGBTQIA+ elected officials. This trend does not mean that there is not still a lot of positive movement to be made.

There are many obstacles to studying LGBTQIA+ legislators based on the nature of the subject. The inclusion and focus on gender and sexual identity is a relatively new topic in the realm of politics and many advancements are currently occurring. Due to how new this topic is, it is hard to study the changes that are actively occurring. Also, unlike gender, race, or ethnicity, sexual orientation is an aspect of identity that an individual can choose to make public or choose to keep to themselves. It can be assumed that if an individual chooses to publically identify with the LGBTQIA+ community, then they are choosing to support issues involving this facet of their identity. There are cases in which individuals' sexual orientation is publically revealed by someone else, but I chose to exclude these individuals because their sexual orientation lacked verification. Both of these drawbacks cannot truly be eliminated and will continue based on the nature of the subject matter.

Another drawback to my study is the application of a variation of social contact theory. I based my causal mechanism on an indirect form of social contact theory. Social contact theory primarily focuses on direct interactions between the two group members, while my assumptions are based primarily on the public coverage by media sources of a LGBTQIA+ representative. This assumption that there is media coverage of these “historic” firsts and that this coverage is consumed by individuals could be flawed due to uneven media coverage and the variance of respondent’s access to media throughout my eleven countries of interest. However, I was able to find that individuals who reported an interest in politics, and likely by extension are likely to consume more media, were likely to support same-sex marriage policies. I was unable to collect reliable data on media coverage within the time that I had for my study. Also, the forms and availability of media coverage, whether newspapers, television/online news, or social media outlets, varies greatly across all of Latin America.

Finally, one main drawback for my study in particular was the data availability and access. I ran into trouble accessing the full surveys for many countries throughout Latin America. The LAPOP survey master file only contained certain countries in specific waves, so I was limited to what was available to me. Also, my main question of interest for my dependent variable was not asked in the survey until 2010 not allowing me to look at attitudes before that period. Also, many countries in Latin America did not elect a LGBTQIA+ representative until recent years which limited the data that I could collect. Also, there are potentially other measures by which I could measure the support for LGBTQIA+ rights, not solely same-sex marriage. I only included one possible measure of support within my analysis, but the results may change depending on a different measure such as civil unions or other political or social rights for the community. Also, due to lack of data I was unable to include variables related to the categories

of top-down literature mentioned in Chapter 2. These factors effect larger governmental institutions and could play a role in support for LGBTQIA+ rights. Overall while there are many drawbacks to my study, I was still able to find a significant relationship between public opinion on same-sex marriage and the election of a LGBTQIA+ legislator which leads to many positives for the LGBTQIA+ movement success.

Suggestions for Future Research

Findings from my study leave room for many future avenues of research. While my analysis was able to tell a broad statistical picture of the entire region, it lacks specifics into causal mechanisms. Previous studies have overlooked the presence of a LGBTQIA+ legislator and their influence over the populace. An in-depth case study of single or multiple countries within the region would provide more context into how and why a LGBTQIA+ representative shapes public opinion on LGBTQIA+ topics.

One important area of future study could focus on the effects of media proliferation within a population involving the election of a LGBTQIA+ representative. Social contact theory and its utility through the modern age of social media and access to internet is a relatively new area of study. I believe that through studying the link of social media coverage of LGBTQIA+ representatives and opinions, the academic community would have a fuller picture of the new ways social contact theory may be used.

Another avenue for future research is to study particular LGBTQIA+ legislators and their actions within the legislature. Due to time constraints I was unable to study this factor, but I believe that it is an important to grasp a fuller picture of LGBTQIA+ movement support. This idea draws upon Pettinichio's (2016) work on how having an elite connection to a movement can

increase the movements likelihood of success. Through understanding actions of particular legislators, the LGBTQIA+ movement and their supporters can find what actions have the most impact on overall support of issues of interest. Based on my study, the only suggestions I can make towards the LGBTQIA+ community is that electing a LGBTQIA+ legislator to federal office does make a difference within the populace.

References

- Allport, Gordon W. 1979. *The Nature of Prejudice*. Unabridged, 25th anniversary ed. Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co.
- "AmericasBarometer, 2010 Sample Design." 2010. *LAPOP*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University. <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/ab2010/AB-2010-Tech-Info-070213-W.pdf>
- "AmericasBarometer, 2012 Sample Design." 2012. *LAPOP*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University. <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/ab2012/AB-2012-Tech-Info-12.18.12.pdf>
- "AmericasBarometer, 2014 Sample Design." 2014. *LAPOP*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University. https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/ab2014/AB-2014-Tech-Info-Updated_092116-W.pdf
- "AmericasBarometer, 2016/17 Sample Design." 2017. *LAPOP*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University. https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/ab2016/AmericasBarometer_2016-17_Tech-Info_W_092517.pdf
- Carlo-Gonzalez, Celin, Christopher McKallagat, and Jenifer Whitten-Woodring. 2017. "The Rainbow Effect: Media Freedom, Internet Access, and Gay Rights: Media Freedom, Internet Access, and Gay Rights." *Social Science Quarterly* 98(3): 1061–77.
- "CNN - Mexican Gays Poised to Make Demands for Change - July 27, 1997." 1997. <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/9707/27/mexico.gays/> (February 8, 2018).
- Corrales, Javier. 2015. "The Politics of LGBT Rights in Latin America and the Caribbean: Research Agendas." *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies / Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe* (100): 53–62.
- Corrales, Javier. 2015. "LGBT Rights and Representation in Latin America and the Caribbean: The Influence of Structure, Movements, Institutions, and Culture." The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: LGBT Representation and Rights Initiative: 1-40. https://globalstudies.unc.edu/files/2015/04/LGBT_Report_LatAm_v8-copy.pdf
- Encarnación, Omar G. 2011. "Latin America's Gay Rights Revolution." *Journal of Democracy* 22(2): 104–118.
- Fish, Eric. 2005. "The Road to Recognition: A Global Perspective on Gay Marriage." *Harvard International Review* 27(2): 32–35.
- Friedman, Elisabeth Jay. 2009. "Gender, Sexuality and the Latin American Left: Testing the Transformation." *Third World Quarterly* 30(2): 415–33.
- Gaines, N. Susan, and James C. Garand. 2010. "Morality, Equality, or Locality: Analyzing the Determinants of Support for Same-Sex Marriage." *Political Research Quarterly* 63(3): 553–67.

- Gamble, Katrina L. 2007. "Black Political Representation: An Examination of Legislative Activity within US House Committees." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 32(3): 421–447.
- Grinberg, Emanuella. 2012. "Wisconsin's Tammy Baldwin Is First Openly Gay Person Elected to Senate - CNNPolitics." *CNN*. <https://www.cnn.com/2012/11/07/politics/wisconsin-tammy-baldwin-senate/index.html> (February 8, 2018).
- Haider-Markel, Donald P. 2002. "Beyond Symbolic Representation: The Influence of Openly Lesbian and Gay Officials in State Legislatures." In *First Annual Conference on State Politics and Policy*. Retrieved from [Http://Www. Olemiss. Edu/Depts/Political_science/Statepolitics/Conferences/2002/Papers/HAIDER-MARKEL.PDF](http://www.olemiss.edu/Depts/Political_science/Statepolitics/Conferences/2002/Papers/HAIDER-MARKEL.PDF). Accessed on April, , 2012. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Donald_Haider-Markel/publication/228376973_Beyond_symbolic_representation_the_influence_of_openly_lesbian_and_gay_officials_in_state_legislatures/links/00b7d527de81a1e512000000.pdf (September 19, 2017).
- Haider-Markel, Donald P., Mark R. Joslyn, and Chad J. Kniss. 2000. "Minority Group Interests and Political Representation: Gay Elected Officials in the Policy Process." *The Journal of Politics* 62(2): 568–77.
- Hansen, Eric R., and Sarah A. Treul. 2015. "The Symbolic and Substantive Representation of LGB Americans in the US House." *The Journal of Politics* 77(4): 955–67.
- Harden, Jeffrey J., and Christopher J. Clark. 2016. "A Legislature or a Legislator Like Me? Citizen Demand for Collective and Dyadic Political Representation." *American Politics Research* 44(2): 247–71.
- Hayes, Matthew, and Matthew V. Hibbing. 2017. "The Symbolic Benefits of Descriptive and Substantive Representation." *Political Behavior* 39(1): 31–50.
- Herrick, Rebekah. 2009. "The Effects of Sexual Orientation on State Legislators' Behavior and Priorities." *Journal of Homosexuality* 56(8): 1117–33.
- Kollman, Kelly. 2007. "Same-Sex Unions: The Globalization of an Idea." *International Studies Quarterly* 51(2): 329–357.
- "LAPOP: Country, 2014." *LAPOP*. Vanderbilt University. https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/ab2014/LAPOP2014-v15.2-Eng-131218_W.pdf (October 30, 2017).
- "Latin American Public Opinion Project." Nashville: Vanderbilt University. <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/>
- Marsiaj, Juan P. 2006. "Social Movements and Political Parties: Gays, Lesbians, and Travestis and the Struggle for Inclusion in Brazil." *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 31(62): 167–196.

- “Methods and Practices.” *LAPOP*. Vanderbilt University.
<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/methods-practices.php> (October 30, 2017).
- Minta, Michael D. 2009. “Legislative Oversight and the Substantive Representation of Black and Latino Interests in Congress.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 34(2): 193–218.
- Minta, Michael D., and Valeria Sinclair-Chapman. 2013. “Diversity in Political Institutions and Congressional Responsiveness to Minority Interests.” *Political Research Quarterly* 66(1): 127–140.
- Pew. 2018. “Religion in Latin America.” *Pew Research Center’s Religion & Public Life Project*.
<http://www.pewforum.org/2014/11/13/religion-in-latin-america/> (February 16, 2018).
- Ogland, Curtis P., and Ana Paula Verona. 2014. “Religion and the Rainbow Struggle: Does Religion Factor Into Attitudes Toward Homosexuality and Same-Sex Civil Unions in Brazil?” *Journal of Homosexuality* 61(9): 1334–49.
- Pettinicchio, David. 2012. “Current Explanations for the Variation in Same-Sex Marriage Policies in Western Countries.” *Comparative Sociology* 11(4): 526–57.
- Reynolds, Andrew. 2013. “Representation and Rights: The Impact of LGBT Legislators in Comparative Perspective.” *American Political Science Review* 107(2): 259–74.
- Sanchez, Gabriel R., and Jason L. Morin. 2011. “The Effect of Descriptive Representation on Latinos’ Views of Government and of Themselves*: Descriptive Representation and Latino Views of Government and Selves.” *Social Science Quarterly* 92(2): 483–508.
- Weldon, S. Laurel. 2002. “Beyond Bodies: Institutional Sources of Representation for Women in Democratic Policymaking.” *Journal of Politics* 64(4): 1153–74.

Appendix

Replication files available by request.

Figure 1. Causal Pathway Flow Chart

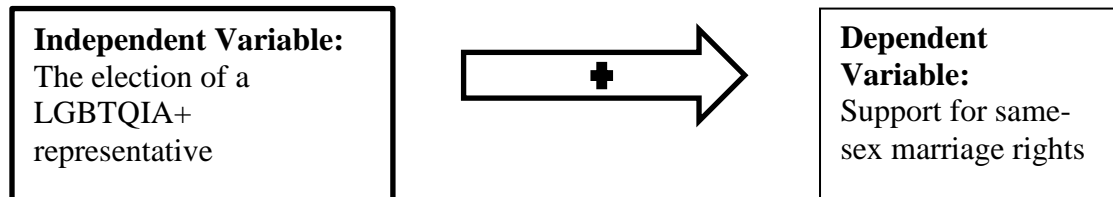


Figure 2. Comparison of Means Test on Same-Sex Marriage Support in Latin America
(2010-2016)

<u>Countries</u>	<u>Survey Wave</u>			
	<u>2010</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2016</u>
<i>Colombia</i>	4.09	4.30	4.13	4.06
<i>Costa Rica</i>	2.86	3.00	3.54*°	4.15*°+
<i>El Salvador</i>	1.92	1.90	2.26*°	2.67*°+
<i>Guatemala</i>	2.49	2.45	1.97*°	3.09 *°+
<i>Honduras</i>	3.03	2.34*	2.27*	2.93°+
<i>Mexico</i>	4.40	5.09 *	4.89*	5.60*°+
<i>Nicaragua</i>	2.40	2.73*	2.30°	3.21*°+
<i>Panama</i>	3.05	2.75	3.25°	2.95
<i>Paraguay</i>	2.44	2.45	2.87*°	3.35*°+
<i>Peru</i>	3.36	3.07	3.37°	3.37 °
<i>Uruguay</i>	5.54	7.04*	7.36*	7.71 *°+

Legend

* = $p \leq 0.05$ from 2010

° = $p \leq 0.05$ from 2012

+ = $p \leq 0.05$ from 2014

MEAN = presence of LGBTQIA+ representative

Table 1: Demographic Summary of Survey Respondents

Age (mean # of years)		39.3	
		% of respondents	Total # of respondents
Gender	Male	49.06	105,544
	Female	50.94	109,600
Education (years)	None	4.20	8,791
	1	1.49	3,117
	2	2.67	5,584
	3	4.00	8,357
	4	3.62	7,563
	5	4.12	8,621
	6	12.78	26,727
	7	3.17	6,633
	8	5.12	10,700
	9	8.21	17,172
	10	5.88	12,307
	11	12.29	25,713
	12	13.32	27,854
	13	3.69	7,713
	14	3.86	8,075
	15	3.24	6,777
	16	3.40	7,113
	17	2.28	4,765
	18+	2.67	5,582
Marital Status	Single	33.22	69,027
	Not Single	66.78	138,774
Follower of a Christian (non-Catholic) religion?	Protestant, Evangelical, other	33.42	37,731
	Not of a Christian (non-Catholic) Religion or Catholic	66.58	75,157
Catholic?	Yes	52.5	59,589
	No, other	47.5	53,299
Follower of a non-Christian religion or do they identify as atheist/agnostic?	Yes	13.79	15,568
	No	86.21	97,320
Religiosity – How often do you attend religious services?	Never or almost never	19.05	21,373
	Once or twice a year	13.83	15,521
	Once a month	19.60	21,985
	Once a week	28.87	32,389
	More than once a week	18.65	20,921
Importance of Religion (in respondent's life)	Not important	5.22	6,055
	A little important	8.19	9,502
	Somewhat important	22.23	25,797
	Very important	64.36	74,688
Interest in Politics	None	34.76	64,558
	A little	34.58	64,237
	Some	20.80	38,638
	A lot	9.86	18,306

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Variables		Mean	Mode	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	Total # of observations
Dependent Variable	Approval of Same-sex Marriage	3.04	1	3.09	0	10	99,393
Independent Variables	Has the country ever had a LGBTQIA+ representative?	0.31	0	0.46	0	1	68,700
	Does the country have a LGBTQIA+ rep. in year of survey?	0.22	0	0.41	0	1	68,700
	Total number of LGBTQIA+ representatives before year of survey?	0.54	0	0.98	0	3	68,700
	Total number of LGBTQIA+ representatives in legislature at time of survey?	0.28	0	0.605	0	2	68,700
Control Variables	Age	39.30	18	15.81	16	101	212,937
	Gender	0.49	Female (0)	0.50	0	1	215,144
	Education (years)	9.13	12	4.44	0	18	209,164
	Does the respondent belong to a Christian (non-Catholic) religion?	0.33	Catholic or other non-Christian religion (0)	0.47	0	1	112,888
	Is the respondent Catholic?	0.525	Catholic (1)	0.499	0	1	112,888
	Does the respondent belong to a non-Christian religion or identify as atheist/agnostic?	0.14	Christian religion (0)	0.344	0	1	112,888
	Religiosity of respondent (Frequency of service attendance)	3.14	4	1.38	0	5	112,189
	How important is religion?	3.46	4	0.85	0	4	116,042
	Marital Status (Single or no)	0.33	Not Single (0)	0.47	0	1	207,801
	How interested in politics is the respondent?	2.06	0	0.97	0	4	185,739

Table 3: Effects of a LGBTQIA+ federal representative on public support for same-sex marriage – Multi-variate Ologit Regression Models

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Ever had a LGBTQIA+ representative	0.505*** (0.0304)			
Has a LGBTQIA+ representative at time of survey		0.311*** (0.0338)		
Total number of LGBTQIA+ representatives ever in the country			0.229*** (0.0122)	
Total number of LGBTQIA+ representatives in legislature in survey year				0.111*** (0.0218)
Age	-0.0112*** (0.000738)	-0.0108*** (0.000731)	-0.0109*** (0.000734)	-0.0106*** (0.000731)
Male	-0.535*** (0.0196)	-0.536*** (0.0195)	-0.537*** (0.0196)	-0.538*** (0.0194)
Single	0.152*** (0.0219)	0.147*** (0.0219)	0.159*** (0.0218)	0.144*** (0.218)
Years of Education Completed	0.0340*** (0.00297)	0.0339*** (0.00293)	0.0332*** (0.00295)	0.0336*** (0.00296)
Religious Denomination	Christian non-Catholic (reference Catholic)	-0.636*** (0.0296)	-0.651*** (0.0296)	-0.601*** (0.0297)
	Non-Christian (reference Catholic)	0.143*** (0.0388)	0.112** (0.0391)	0.160*** (0.0393)
Church Attendance	-0.173*** (0.00979)	-0.173*** (0.00976)	-0.175*** (0.00978)	-0.172*** (0.00974)
Importance of religion	-0.352*** (0.0161)	-0.369*** (0.0161)	-0.350*** (0.0162)	-0.378*** (0.0162)
Interest in Politics	0.188*** (0.0113)	0.189*** (0.0113)	0.188*** (0.0114)	0.189*** (0.0113)
2012 (reference 2010)	0.136** (0.0453)	0.138** (0.0449)	0.136** (0.0451)	0.142** (0.0449)
2014 (reference 2010)	0.110 (0.0846)	0.270** (0.0847)	0.159 (0.0829)	0.335*** (0.0858)
2016 (reference 2010)	0.199*** (0.0345)	0.333*** (0.0349)	0.280*** (0.0340)	0.363*** (0.0355)
<i>N</i>	40,874	40,874	40,874	40,874
<i>Prob > F</i>	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Significance levels: *p<.05; **p<0.01, ***p>0.001. Robust standard errors in parentheses.				

Table 4: Single Countries Multi-variate Ologit Regression Model

	Guatemala	Peru	Uruguay
Has a LGBTQIA+ representative at time of survey	0.283** (0.0853)	0.0141 (0.0720)	1.078*** (0.0869)
Age	-0.0136*** (0.00283)	-0.0109*** (0.00228)	-0.0215*** (0.00222)
Male	-0.444*** (0.0724)	-0.407*** (0.0655)	-0.728*** (0.0719)
Single	0.311** (0.0946)	0.314*** (0.0704)	0.207* (0.0802)
Years of Education Completed	-0.0219* (0.00913)	0.0392*** (0.00928)	0.0825*** (0.00960)
Religious Denomination			
Christian non-Catholic (reference Catholic)	-0.482*** (0.0812)	-0.785*** (0.108)	-0.659*** (0.0878)
Non-Christian (reference Catholic)	-0.681*** (0.200)	0.262 (0.149)	0.203* (0.0845)
Church Attendance	-0.182*** (0.0299)	-0.108*** (0.0307)	-0.253*** (0.0427)
Importance of religion	-0.142 (0.0754)	-0.184*** (0.0500)	-0.107* (0.0440)
Interest in Politics	0.191*** (0.0402)	0.125*** (0.0368)	0.277*** (0.0364)
<i>N</i>	3,363	4,430	3,516
<i>Prob > F</i>	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000

Significance levels: *p<.05; **p<0.01, ***p>0.001. Robust standard errors in parentheses.

Variable Name	Variable Description	Level of Measurement	Operationalization
have_ever	Has the country ever had a LGBTQIA+ representative in their federal legislature	Nominal	0 = no 1 = yes
have_currently	Does the country have a LGBTQIA+ representative at the time the survey was taken?	Nominal	0= no 1= yes
total_ever	How many total LGBTQIA+ representatives has the country had before and up to the time of the survey?	Ratio	0=0 1=1 2=2
total_currently	How many LGBTQIA+ representatives are serving in the legislature at the time of the survey?	Ratio	0=0 1=1 2=2
d6	“How strongly do you approve or disapprove of same-sex couples having the right to marry?”	Ordinal	1= Disagree Firmly 10 = Agree Firmly
Age	Age of respondent	Ratio 16=16 17=17 18=18
Genderdich	Dichotomous measure of gender	Nominal	0 = Female 1= Male
Single	Dichotomous marital status measure. Is the respondent single or not?	Nominal	0 = not single 1 = single
ed	Years of education completed	Interval	1=1 2=2 3=3 18+ = 18+

religiosity	“How often do you attend religious services?”	Ordinal	1= Never or almost never 2= One or two times a year 3= Once a month 4= Once a week 5= More than once a week
catholic	Dichotomous measure. Is the person Catholic?	Nominal	0 = Not Catholic 1= Catholic
christian	Does the respondent belong to a Christian (non-Catholic) religion?	Nominal	0= Catholic or non-Christian 1=Protestant, Evangelical, Jehovas Witness, Latter Day Saints
relsother	Does the respondent belong to a non-Christian religion or are they agnostic/atheist?	Nominal	0=Catholic, Christian (non-Catholic) 1=Jewish, Agnostic/Atheist, Traditional Religions/Native Religions, None
pol_interest	“How interested are you in politics?”	Ordinal	1= None 2= A Little 3= Some 4= A lot
year2010	Does the survey take place in 2010?	Nominal	0= 2012 wave, 2014 wave, 2016 wave 1= 2010 wave
year2012	Does the survey take place in 2012?	Nominal	0= 2010 wave, 2014 wave, 2016 wave 1= 2012 wave
year2014	Does the survey take place in 2014?	Nominal	0= 2010 wave, 2012 wave, 2016 wave 1= 2014 wave
year2016	Does the survey take place in 2016?	Nominal	0= 2012 wave, 2012 wave, 2014 wave 1= 2016 wave